

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 22, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

## ASSEMBLY BILL

**No. 554**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Furutani**

February 25, 2009

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An act to amend Section 51225.3 of the Education Code, relating to graduation requirements.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 554, as amended, Furutani. Graduation requirements.

Existing law prohibits a pupil from receiving a diploma of graduation from high school unless he or she completes specified requirements, including, but not limited to, completing one course in visual or performing arts or foreign language and 2 courses in physical education, except as specified.

~~This bill would authorize a pupil, with the consent of his or her parent or guardian and with the concurrence of the governing board, to replace each of these courses with a career technical course. The bill would specify that, for purposes of graduation requirements, any career technical course completed pursuant to these provisions would serve as a legitimate substitute for the replaced course.~~

*This bill would require that a pupil take at least 2 courses from the subject areas of visual or performing arts, foreign language, or career technical education, as defined, rather than on course in visual or performing arts or foreign language. The bill would require schools, to the extent practicable, to offer courses within their existing school calendars. Because the bill would require schools to provide a higher level of service, it would impose a state-mandated local program.*

*The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.*

*This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.*

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~-yes.  
State-mandated local program: ~~no~~-yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1     *SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the*  
2     *following:*
- 3     *(1) The foundational principle of the Education Code is that all*  
4     *pupils should have access to equitable educational opportunities*  
5     *and resources.*
- 6     *(2) The future of the state is dependent upon minimizing, if not*  
7     *entirely eliminating, the inequities in our public schools so that*  
8     *all pupils will have more equitable opportunities to learn skills*  
9     *needed for entry into the workforce, to pursue postsecondary*  
10    *educational goals, and to contribute to the social cohesion of the*  
11    *state.*
- 12    *(3) Current law specifies the courses a pupil must take in order*  
13    *to graduate from high school. However, too many pupils are*  
14    *dropping out of high school or graduating without the necessary*  
15    *foundation to succeed in the workplace or in postsecondary*  
16    *education.*
- 17    *(b) It is therefore, the intent of the Legislature that by specifying*  
18    *the types of coursework that pupils must complete in order to*  
19    *graduate, pupils will have world class skills and the workforce of*  
20    *the state will be competitive in the global economy.*
- 21    *(c) It is also the intent of the Legislature that pupils be prepared*  
22    *to meet the academic and technical skills challenges of the high*  
23    *school curriculum and that they take advantage of the range of*  
24    *course options available to them.*
- 25    *(d) It is further the intent of the Legislature that in order to*  
26    *increase the rigor of the coursework and to ensure that pupils are*  
27    *prepared to meet the demands of the 21st century, the courses*

1 *required for high school graduation be aligned with standards*  
2 *and frameworks that are adopted by the State Board of Education.*

3 **SECTION 1.**

4 *SEC. 2.* Section 51225.3 of the Education Code is amended to  
5 read:

6 51225.3. (a) Commencing with the 1988–89 school year, no  
7 pupil shall receive a diploma of graduation from high school who,  
8 while in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, has not completed all of the  
9 following:

10 (1) At least the following numbers of courses in the subjects  
11 specified, each course having a duration of one year, unless  
12 otherwise specified.

13 (A) Three courses in English.

14 (B) Two courses in mathematics.

15 (C) Two courses in science, including biological and physical  
16 sciences.

17 (D) Three courses in social studies, including United States  
18 history and geography; world history, culture, and geography; a  
19 one-semester course in American government and civics, and a  
20 one-semester course in economics.

21 ~~(E) One course in visual or performing arts or foreign language.~~  
22 ~~For the purposes of satisfying the requirement specified in this~~  
23 ~~subparagraph, a course in American Sign Language shall be~~  
24 ~~deemed a course in foreign language.~~

25 (E) Two courses from any of the following three subject areas:

26 (i) Visual or performing arts.

27 (ii) Foreign Language. *For the purposes of satisfying the*  
28 *requirement specified in this subparagraph, a course in American*  
29 *Sign Language shall be deemed a course in foreign language.*

30 (iii) Career technical education.

31 (F) *For the purposes of satisfying the requirements of*  
32 *subparagraph (E), the following shall apply:*

33 (i) *Schools, to the extent practicable, shall offer courses within*  
34 *their existing school calendars.*

35 (ii) *“Career technical education course” means a course in a*  
36 *district-operated career technical education program that is*  
37 *aligned to the career technical education model curriculum*  
38 *standards and framework adopted by the state board.*

39 ~~(F)~~

1 (G) Two courses in physical education, unless the pupil has  
2 been exempted pursuant to the provisions of this code.

3 (2) Other coursework as the governing board of the school  
4 district may by rule specify.

5 (b) The governing board, with the active involvement of parents,  
6 administrators, teachers, and pupils, shall adopt alternative means  
7 for pupils to complete the prescribed course of study which may  
8 include practical demonstration of skills and competencies,  
9 supervised work experience or other outside school experience,  
10 career technical education classes offered in high schools, courses  
11 offered by regional occupational centers or programs,  
12 interdisciplinary study, independent study, and credit earned at a  
13 postsecondary institution. Requirements for graduation and  
14 specified alternative modes for completing the prescribed course  
15 of study shall be made available to pupils, parents, and the public.

16 ~~(e) A pupil, with the consent of his or her parent or guardian~~  
17 ~~and with the concurrence of the governing board, may substitute~~  
18 ~~a career technical course for each of the following courses:~~

19 ~~(1) One course in visual or performing arts or foreign language,~~  
20 ~~pursuant to paragraph (E):~~

21 ~~(2) Two courses in physical education, pursuant to paragraph~~  
22 ~~(F):~~

23 ~~(d) Each career technical course that a pupil completes pursuant~~  
24 ~~to subdivision (e) shall serve as a legitimate substitute for the~~  
25 ~~course that it replaced for purposes of graduation requirements.~~

26 *SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that*  
27 *this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to*  
28 *local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made*  
29 *pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division*  
30 *4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.*